

and we feel that Baron Fleming has truly divined the sentiments both of his son and of the author when he thus gives expression to his own: —

What were all those great poets of whom we now talk so much, what were they in their lifetime? The most miserable of their species. . . . A man of great energies aspires that they should be felt in his lifetime, that his existence should be rendered more intensely vital by the constant consciousness of his multiplied and multiplying power. Is posthumous fame a substitute for all this? . . . Would you rather have been Homer or Julius Caesar, Shakespeare or Napoleon? No one doubts. . . . We are active beings, and our sympathy above all other sympathies is with great action. . . . Mix in society [is his final advice], and I will answer that you lose your poetic feeling; for in you as in the great majority, it is not a creative faculty originating in a peculiar organization, but simply the consequence of a nervous susceptibility that is common to all.¹

From the moment that Contarini sets out upon his travels the value of the novel as a biographic document rapidly diminishes. The fact is, just as in *Vivian Grey*, after the first volume, the creative impulse is now spent; the author has given us a picture of his inward experience as far as it has been carried, and he has to resort to book making to bring his story to an end. It is better book making than what we get in the second volume of *Vivian Grey*, but little more can be said in its praise. Contarini first of all finds his way to Venice and there meets and marries his predestined bride, the last of his mother's house. Apart from the descriptions, this part of the tale is merely conventional romance, with even less relation than has generally been supposed to Disraeli's own experience. After a year of intense happiness in Crete the bride dies in childbirth, and in a highly melodramatic scene the hero, maddened by his anguish, flings himself from a peak of Mount Ida. For anything that he ever seems to accomplish he might just as well succeed in his purpose of self-